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The Hidden Teachings of Jesus Revealed

A mystical explanation of the teachings of Jesus based on the Gospel According to St. John.

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1

The Good News

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1

BEFORE creation, pure Consciousness alone rested in a vibrationless, unconditioned state. This is the *transcendental* aspect of God which is forever changeless. But, there is also a *manifest* aspect which appears as creation. The two aspects are not separate, because the transcendental aspect is the sole cause and sustainer of all relative manifestations.

In order for creation to come into outward manifestation, pure Consciousness "moved" or set up a gentle vibration which then continued on to become an activating force. A dual flow of power became evident; positive and negative electric poles.

At the *right hand,* appeared the Universal Intelligence or Christ Consciousness and at the *left,* the Word. some mystics refer to it as the Amen or Aum. Universal Intelligence, through the Word guides the creative process.

"All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." 1:3.

All created things are extensions, in form, of pure Consciousness. Therefore, there is nothing in this or any

other world which is not Consciousness in manifestation. Creation as we behold it, is life acting upon itself. It is our lack of intuitive insight which causes us to conclude that matter is anything but Spirit formed. Even scientists today declare creation to be energy formed and we can, by following energy back to its source, conclude that it is really light, and light is but a manifestation of Consciousness. On the spiritual path it is extremely important to remember this basic truth, that Consciousness, the sole Reality, is appearing as creation.

"In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." 1:4,5.

In this ocean of Consciousness which was, and is, appearing as creation, is the only life there is and the only light there is. This life and light exists even when men in spiritual ignorance fail to comprehend it. A man in darkness, who lacks intuitive perception, cannot perceive the light which is in and through him and without which, he would not be. All men must eventually be awakened or spiritually quickened before they can comprehend the Truth about life. This awakening is the second birth, which awakens the soul intuition and enables us to become aware of the finer forces and electricities in nature and eventually enables us to realize the true nature of God.

Intellectual willingness may precede this awakening, but it cannot take the place of it. Degrees of spiritual awakening are accompanied by the comprehension of new areas of life and consciousness. The law is the same for all men; he that seeks shall find.

"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of the Light." 1:6 - 8.

Every new stage of conscious awareness is preceded by a recognizable state of awareness with certain characteristics. The preceding state bears witness to the one to come. In the gospel narration, John the Baptist is consid-

ered to be the forerunner of Jesus. He prepared the way for the enlightened awareness which would be evident in the latter's life by drawing people's attention to the necessity of the spiritual path. John was not the Light, that is, he was not fully illumined at this time. But, he was sufficiently aware to know that a greater expression of God-consciousness was due to come upon the scene. According to occult tradition, John the Baptist was the guru of Jesus in a previous incarnation when they played the roles of Elijah and Elisha, respectively. In the Old Testament we find Elijah giving his mantle or spiritual consciousness to Elisha, who then went forth with new power and realization. It is traditional in the East for a guru, just before he departs this world, to impart spiritual awakening to a chosen disciple who then carries on the work of showing souls the way to liberation.

> "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own and his own received him not. But, as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. Which was born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." 1:9-13.

God is the true Light which animates all men. The positive manifestation of pure Consciousness, Universal Intelligence (Christ Consciousness) revealed God. But, even though this Light was revealed in the life of Jesus, the world could not conceive or comprehend it at the level of mass perception. This is true even today. The Light is just as available today as it was at any time in history, but people who are not intuitively awakened cannot discern It. When men are deluded their perceptions are feeble and they tend to be materialistic, since the material aspect of creation is all they can perceive through their senses. The deluded condition of men is not his true condition and it is only temporary.

When man learns to awaken and begins to receive (accept) the Infinite here and now, he comes into the

realization of tremendous power due to his comprehension of Omnipotence and Omnipresence. He then realizes his true nature as a son of God, a divine being. Every soul is Spirit individualized and therefore, is what God is. A true spiritual message encourages man to awaken and come into the realization of this truth in order that he might be saved from misery and pain due to ignorance. All who "believe in his name" or commune with their God-nature, are led into the realization of ultimate truth.

Just as creation came into manifestation from the pure, unconditioned state through successive stages, so man can begin where he is and move back to the realization of himself as pure Spirit. Since the first emanation from the Center is Universal Intelligence or Christ Consciousness, one who moves through the veils of awareness to become aware of this, partakes of, and is able to manifest, accordingly. It is literally true that all must "repent" or turn their attention from the world of appearances back to the source of all forms and appearances.

The soul, individualized Spirit, in truth, is never born of flesh. It identifies with the body because of ignorance. But its beginning was of God . . . when Spirit individualized as it. It is obvious that mere believing in a doctrine of salvation is not enough to liberate man from bondage. But, contemplation that results in the realization of Oneness is a sure way.

> "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." 1:14.

The Word (Activating Consciousness) appears as form. In this instance, the scripture is referring to the incarnation of Jesus. Jesus incarnated and appeared a man among men but there was a difference. He was near enlightenment and therefore, about to become aware of his life mission. It is said that when a perfected being, a self-realized soul, elects to incarnate, for a specific purpose, due to the shock of physical birth there is a temporary shutting down

of awareness and, during the early years on the earth plane, the soul awakens once again to the full realization it possessed before incarnating. John, being intuitive, was able to see this about Jesus and "beheld his glory." He was able to discern the spiritual radiance which was due to the inner realization of Jesus. A soul which is aware of Christ Consciousness, which is the only begotten of the Father (all else being further modification of it) lives in a consciousness which transcends personality and is aware always of its God-nature. Jesus was not the only begotten. Christ Consciousness is. There is a difference between the personality and the self-realized soul. The scriptures here reveal that the glory revealed in Jesus was "as of" the only begotten.

Being filled with the realization of Christ Consciousness, Jesus is, quite naturally and automatically, filled with grace and truth, which are attributes of this Consciousness:

"John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, this was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for he was before me." 1:15.

John recognized Jesus as being spiritually aware and as one in whom the fullness of Consciousness could be manifest. Here we have a play on words, "He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for he was before me." The ministry of Christ Consciousness is appearing as the next phase after the ministry of John the Baptist. The latter goes one step further, however, and declares that the reason why Christ Consciousness is preferred before his own consciousness (and teaching) is because the Christ Consciousness preceded, in the order of creative manifestation, all other shadings of consciousness. John the Baptist was undoubtedly spiritually awakened to be able to discern this truth but he was not, at this time, fully self-realized. Or, if he was, he was aware of playing his alloted role.

"And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." 1:16, 17.

Every man is full of the Christ Consciousness and is therefore possessed of all the desirable attributes, whether he realizes it or not. In times before (referring to the time of Moses in this instance) when mass awareness was dim, an elaborate set of laws was given to serve as a guideline for human behavior in society. When man awakens to his nature as a Christ Conscious being, he rises above man-made laws (though he does not break them if his example will harm society) and lives by grace. When we live by grace we move through this world in tune with the Infinite Will, and though we may outwardly conform, we are inwardly guided in all that we do.

"No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." 1:18.

No person who is functioning in three-dimensional consciousness, limited in his perception to only that which is revealed through the senses has perceived Reality. We may perceive attributes of Spirit; light, vibration, joy, bliss, peace, love, omnipresence, omnipotence and omniscience; but as long as we are limited due to our identification with the outward appearances of nature, we cannot directly see or, perceive, the transcendental aspect of God. When one perceives the true nature of God and this vision dominates his life, such a one is no longer a man in the accepted sense but is an awakened Son of God.

Christ Consciousness, being the first and, therefore, only begotten of the Father (pure Consciousness) declares or reveals, the nature of God. Since pure Consciousness is incomprehensible (only realizable) the Christ Consciousness gives an indication of it.

In the verses which follow, John the Baptist goes on to state that he himself is not the Christ (he does not manifest at this time the Christ Consciousness) and even denies that he is the reincarnation of Elijah because he is not aware of that past incarnation. All he can say is that he is a voice crying in the wilderness of human thought,

preparing the way for a new and more revealing state of consciousness which will be embodied in the man Jesus.

John baptized with water as this is a symbol of purification, an indication of a transformed life. But he said that the one who came after him (Jesus) would baptize with the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost (Sacred Vibration) is the Word, Amen or Aum. One who is baptized or immersed in this experiences the magnetic pull of Spirit which clears the mind and consciousness so that God can be realized. One can be baptized with the Holy Ghost either as a result of inward yearning to know the truth, which forces soul awakening, or by coming in contact with a highly self-realized person. The presence of a self-realized person stirs sleeping soul memories and forces spiritual awakening. Through our contact with one who is spiritually awakened, we are magnetized, the life forces are quickened and we are intuitively awakened.

Then, in the 29th verse, John the Baptist sees Jesus and prepares to baptize him. Even though Jesus is destined outwardly to play a more dramatic role than John, still he follows the path ordained by tradition and comes to John, his guru, for the mystic touch, the initiation or awakening. While being baptized by John, with water, in conformity with John's ritual, Jesus has an experience of being lifted above the human sense.

> "And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode on him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." 1:32, 33.

John was led of the Spirit to a marvelous degree. He knew that as he performed his duty of baptising and trying to spiritually awaken people, that eventually he would confront the one person who would mark the fulfillment of his mission. He knew he would recognize this person because, during initiation, this person would receive the full spiritual consciousness. John saw evidence that Spirit seemed to descend and this awareness of Spirit "abode" or remain-

ed. Now, many people have a glimpse of the cosmic vision, then they return to their ordinary consciousness. But, as John saw it, here was a person who, by virtue of being receptive, was able to retain the awareness of God once he awakened to it. This was the evidence that John was looking for and it was the "beginning of the end" of his personal ministry. From that moment on, the vital work was to manifest in the continued unfoldment of Jesus. So sure was John the Baptist that he had at last met his successor, that he bore record . . . .

" . . . . that this is the Son of God." 1:34.

Anyone who becomes aware of his real nature, as a spiritual being, and lives from this realization, is an awakened Son of God.

We are told in another gospel that after this dramatic awakening, Jesus retired to a secluded place to become stabilized in his new consciousness. There he successfully resisted the urges of the subconscious tendencies to use his insight and ability for personal gain. A lesson is here set forth from which we all might benefit.

Then, the ministry of Jesus began and he proceeded to gather his disciples around him. Andrew, Simon Peter, Philip and Nathanael were among the first. Many scholars dispute the idea that these men would follow Jesus so readily, yet, understanding the occult law that an Avatar comes for a purpose, and a number of his chosen disciples incarnate at a convenient time to assist him, it is not strange that when he called them forth they responded.

A Master knows his disciples and often the disciple, when called, awakens immediately and enters into a working relationship with the Master. As John the Baptist was able to recognize Jesus for what he was, so Jesus was able to recognize his chosen ones. Jesus said of Nathanael,

"Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile." 1:47.

Nathanael was without deceitfulness. He was pure and open and the ideal type to receive the wisdom of the ages.

He was surprised, however, and asked the pointed question, "whence knowest thou me?" Jesus told him, "Before Philip called thee, I saw thee." This impressed Nathanael and he accepted Jesus as his preceptor or guru. Jesus was likewise pleased with this ready response on the part of Nathanael and told him that because he was so perceptive he would see greater things than these (greater than mere clairvoyant demonstrations) and he would see heaven open and be able to behold the angels (astral beings) ascending and descending upon the son of man. He would be able to perceive souls, clothed in astral light, entering and leaving bodies and he might also perceive the celestial beings who were later to communicate with Jesus.

From this point on, according to St. John's narration, the ministry of Jesus moves right along. We find him in the second chapter at the marriage of Cana, and from there he goes to Jerusalem at passover time. There he is described as being so upset over temple activities, money changing, buying and selling, that he puts the responsible parties to route by rather violent means.

Also, at this time, many saw his miracles of healing and were impressed. But, he did not "commit himself to them because he knew all men." That is, he was aware of the level of understanding of the average man and saw no reason to try to declare to them who he really was and thus force them to take a stand one way or another.

Then, a Pharisee, Nicodemus, came to Jesus by night and affirmed his belief in Jesus' spiritual awareness . . . "for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." (3:2)

> "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." 3:3.

Here is stated a profound truth. Unless a man is born into a new state of consciousness he cannot comprehend the subtle truths of life. Nor, can he experience a clearing of his consciousness and realize the ultimate Truth. Nicodemus, like many in the ordinary state of consciousness,

cannot understand this and says so; "How can a man be born when he is old?" Jesus responds:

> "I say unto thee, except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." 3:5.

Water here signifies the elements of the physical world. A man must, therefore, be born in the normal manner and then awaken spiritually in order to move consciously into the awareness of the World of Reality, the perfect creation, undistorted by error and false perceptions, of which this ordinary realm is but a reflection.

> "That which is born of flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of Spirit, is Spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and wither it goeth: so is every one that is born of Spirit." 3:6-8.

That which is under the law of physical incarnation must live by material laws, but when the soul awakens spiritually it can live according to the new level of understanding. "Do not be surprised at this, we are told, for the intellectual acceptance makes it easier to comprehend. The wind blows where it pleases and we can hear the sound of it but cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. The one born of Spirit is like this, he moves as he pleases through this world, but his movement is always in line with the cosmic will for he is ever attuned to it." One who is intuitively awakened follows no rigid plan of action unless it is for a specific purpose. For the most part, he does at the moment that which seems right and best for that moment.

Nicodemus still does not understand and Jesus tells him that he speaks of what he, himself, knows and sees:

> "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" 3:12.

Jesus points out that a man can see only according to his level of understanding. The explanation still does not satisfy his questioner, and because Nicodemus cannot grasp simple truths he obviously is not capable of grasping more subtle ones at this time. But, Jesus continues:

"And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven." 3:13.

Jesus explains that no man can ascend to the awareness of heaven, the Kingdom of Reality, unless he first comes from that level of understanding. In other words, all souls, even those who are not aware of who they are, at one time resided in the realm of freedom and bliss, before they became involved with the outer appearance of nature. This is why it is possible for them to awaken and become aware of these realms again. Every soul, during the initial creative act, "fell" into involvement with creation at one level or another. Some became involved in material creation. Others only became involved in the subtle light realms and then "fell" into material creation because their curiosity got the better of them. Because every soul is divine, it is possible for all to awaken and realize (remember) the nature of God.

"And, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; That whosoever, believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." 3:14, 15.

Jesus here refers to the Old Testament incident (Numbers 21:9) where Moses erected a molten serpent for his people to look upon when they were in tribulation, and it apparently enabled them to lift their consciousness, which freed them from trouble and discord. Likewise, for the people of this generation (the time of Jesus as well as any time when the masses are unawakened) it is a good idea for people to elevate the Son of Man, Jesus, in their mind's eye, to a place where they can, by contemplating him as the ideal, be lifted above the troubles which are the result of self-centered thinking and misguided behavior. Those who can sustain this upward vision will, in time, "believe in him" or be able to discern the spiritual truth about the ministry of Jesus, and intuitively perceive the impersonal Christ Consciousness. This will insure that they not perish (be lost in confusion and turmoil) but will come to the realization of eternal life. A soul cannot perish, in the sense of being destroyed, but it can, by refusing to keep

the attention flowing to the Source, become lost in the maze of conflicting opinion and theory and lose sight of the true Light and Life.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." 3:16.

God, Consciousness, the sole Reality, in order to manifest as creation, had to extend dual electric flows. The initial positive impulse is Intelligence, without which creation would be blind or disorderly. This Intelligence is Christ Consciousness and is the "only begotten" of the Father. All souls, regardless of their degree of delusion, which "believe" or commune with the Christ Consciousness, awaken to the realization of their true nature and consciously know "everlasting life."

After the Holy Ghost baptism, or initial spiritual awakening, the sincere truth seeker is instructed to contemplate Christ Consciousness, that which is nearest to "the Father," or the transcendental state. By successfully contemplating this, the soul is able to experience clear awareness. From this level it can become aware of its nature as God. It is literally true that the only way to complete self-realization is through spiritual awakening (the second birth), contemplation of Christ Consciousness or Universal Intelligence, then to become aware of the transcendental aspect of God. Regardless of the techniques, methods or beliefs, all souls follow the same route to liberation.

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him, is not condemned: but he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." 3:17,18.

The Infinite Intelligence, pervading all space and animating all forms, does not condemn. But the world, those in mortal consciousness, by believing on (communing with) this level of awareness, can be saved from pain due to delusion.

People who do not believe on (commune with) this Infinite Intelligence must continue in spiritual ignorance until they eventually awaken. They are self-condemned to wander in delusion for the duration of their ignorance. God does not punish souls, which are really individualizations of Itself. Deluded souls must continue in their blind condition until they awaken and learn to contemplate the true nature of God (themselves). Then, they experience freedom.

The main limiting factors which must be overcome are five in number.

1. IGNORANCE—A soul is ignorant of the Truth about life when it is unconsciously identified with nature. This condition is the cause of all of our human problems.
2. EGOISM—This is the belief that we are separate from God. The cure for egoism is humility, which means to come into the realization that God is the only reality and is appearing as everything in nature. There is nothing apart from God.
3. ATTACHMENT—This is an indication that a person does not really understand the truth that Consciousness is appearing as all things. The cure for this is to stop relying upon specific people, conditions or things in the world and turn the attention to the real source of all things.
4. AVERSION—To compulsively reject any manifestation of life is to fail to realize that God is in and through all. When we see a situation created by unwise people, which, to us, does not seem to be in accord with the Divine plan, we should not reject it but rather, strive to bring order, direction and purpose into the situation.
5. CLINGING TO THE BODY—While we should maintain the body in a healthy condition so that it serves us well, we should ever remember that our true na-

ture is Spirit and that the body is but a vehicle and will, one day, be vacated.

True self-realization shatters these erroneous beliefs that stand in the way of liberation.

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But, he that doeth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be manifest, that they are wrought in God." 3:19-21.

When men are in the deluded state they are hypnotized and cannot understand anything concerning the subtle truths of life. They prefer their condition because they have not known anything else. Being in darkness, they are negative and self-seeking in almost everything they think and do. At this level, people tend to be cynical, antagonistic and critical of spiritual teachings which might reveal the light and reveal them to be lacking in understanding. Instead of trying to awaken, such people defend their outlook on life in order to protect and justify themselves.

On the other hand, a person who is moving into the light of self-realization loves the idea of greater unfoldment because he wants to be in harmony with the creative principle in all things. He wants his actions to be "wrought in God" or performed in the awareness of God.

Soon after, there arises the question of purification. (John 3:25) Some people come to John the Baptist and mention that Jesus, who was baptized by John, is now drawing all men to himself. These people also sense that the ministry of Jesus is more powerful, more effective and more result producing. John is not envious for he knows his mission as well as the mission of his disciple, Jesus. He says:

"A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven." 3:27.

"He must increase, but I must decrease." 3:30.

John the Baptist recognized that a man's experiences are the result of inner realization. He knew that Jesus had

the awareness of his own mission and that he would draw all men to the higher life. (All men are, in time, drawn to the realization of Christ Consciousness). He also knew, now that his mission was over, that his influence would decrease while the ministry of Jesus would continue to increase. He was not sad, but elated, to see the fulfillment of his dreams. He said:

"For he whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." 3:34.

He who is an open channel of the Infinite can see and speak clearly and the spiritual power is not given to him by measure, but is unlimited . . . because Spirit is unlimited.

In the first few verses of chapter five, we read that Jesus, becoming aware of the unrest caused by his personal success, in contrast to John the Baptist's, left Judea and went to Galilee. Here, the unrest was among the Pharisees and not among John and his followers. Also, it is recorded at this time that Jesus did not baptize with water but gave this responsibility to his disciples. While on his journey, Jesus rested by a well and soon a woman of Samaria came to draw water. The disciples had gone into the city to obtain food. Jesus asked the woman for a drink of water. The woman was surprised because she was a Samaritan and her people usually had no dealings with the Jews. Jesus then informed the woman that if she truly knew who he was, if she knew his nature as a God-conscious soul, she would ask him for "living waters." A Master, when requested to do so, if the disciple is in tune, can awaken in the disciple the awareness of the soul so that the disciple, aware of his soul nature, becomes conscious of the fact that he lives by the power of free flowing Spirit.

When the woman asked Jesus about these waters he, in turn, requested that she call her husband. She informed him that she had no husband. Jesus then demonstrated clairvoyance or clear vision by telling her she was correct, she had no husband but she knew at least five men with

whom she lived and the man with whom she was living was not her husband. The woman was impressed and declared that Jesus must be a prophet, otherwise he could not know this about her. When she said, according to her tradition, "this mountain" was her place of worship, Jesus enlightened her:

> "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit; and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in truth." 4:21-24.

It is not the physical place that matters in worship, since God is Spirit, the successful worshipper must commune Spirit to Spirit. The soul, being Spirit individualized, must be realized as such, and in this manner all ties to tradition and ritual fall by the wayside.

The woman was impressed and went into the city to tell of her experience with Jesus. Then, the disciples returned with food and offered a portion of it to Jesus. Jesus, perhaps still caught up in the transcendental consciousness, told them:

> "I have meat that you know not of. My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." 4:32-34.

The "meat" or that which sustained Jesus was the Infinite Power which motivated him and imbued him with the vision and power to carry out his life's work. His reason for incarnating was always in the forefront of his consciousness. Jesus fits the description set forth in the Oriental scriptures of an Avatar, a perfected being who returns to earth to enlighten mankind. This being the case it is no wonder why psychologists who look for subconscious motives for his attitudes and behavior, fail to understand him. The incarnation of a Self-realized soul is part of the cosmic plan and we see this in the fact that John the Baptist was expecting Jesus and there were disciples ready to be called forth to assist him in his ministry.

"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest? Behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." 4:35, 36.

In relationship to harvesting crops we can tell the time of the harvest by the signs that come before. But, in a spiritual sense, though we can tell by the signs which precede awakening, that we are about to reap the harvest of inner serenity and bliss, we need not wait. By directing the attention to the nature of God we can "reap the harvest" of Self-realization immediately and "gather fruit unto life eternal." We then manifest the attributes of Spirit and realize the truth that the sower and the reaper are one and the same God, the sower is also God, the reaper.

Quite naturally, there were some who could accept this doctrine and there were others who would not. Jesus continued on to Galilee and was there confronted by a man who asked him to heal his son. Jesus said, simply, "Go thy way, thy son liveth." The man went home, believing, and found his son well and the fever had left the boy at the exact hour he, himself, had been with Jesus. This is recorded as the second miracle. In the light of modern Truth teachings we know it is a relatively simple thing for a God-tuned person to "speak the word" and heal at a distance. But, even today, such healing is considered, by many, to be a miracle.

After this incident, Jesus moved on to Jerusalem and there, by a sheep market, was a pool called Bethesda. This pool was a healing shrine for many people frequented it in the hope of being cured. One man was not able to get into the pool and told his story to Jesus. (John 5:7). The man was instructed by Jesus to take up his bed and walk. And the man, believing, did as he was told.

However, it was the sabbath day and the Jews at the time did not go along with the idea of a person carrying his bedding on the sabbath. Since a crowd began to gath-

er, Jesus left that place and went to the temple where, later, he met the man who had been healed. He gave the man sound advice, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing befall thee." (Do not return to your former pattern of negative thinking and believing or you will duplicate your original sick condition or bring on a worse one).

Man sins or, misses the mark, in his thinking and believing and creates his own limitation in his body or environment. This is because of the law of the mental equivalent: *inner mental pictures tend to reflect as outer circumstances.* Every person projects in his environment what he secretly believes he is worthy of experiencing. Just as a person can create sickness and limitation, so he can, by releasing these concepts of sickness and limitation, experience health and unlimited expression. It does not matter how long we have been bound in negative mental picturing, when we break the pattern we can be released in a moment. This is the secret of instantaneous healing.

The healed man related his story to the Jewish leaders and they sought to punish Jesus because he had violated their sabbath. Jesus said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." This only complicated matters because now he had not only broken the sabbath but had declared himself to be equal to God. There follows a long explanation of the relationship of the Son with the Father. (Christ Consciousness reflecting the will of Spirit). The explanation is that Christ Consciousness, being an emanation of Spirit, can only do what it is impelled to do. Thus, Jesus, being established in Christ Consciousness, can only do what he is led to do at the moment. His intuition is his guide, not the traditions of men.

In chapter six of the Gospel according to St. John, we find Jesus going over the sea of Galilee. Then follows the episode of the loaves and fishes. Another move is made and the multitudes follow him, drawn by the word of his miracle-working power. In a discussion with skeptics (6:24-

40) the people say, "Is this not Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?" (6:42).

> "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and learned of the Father, cometh unto me. Not that any hath seen the Father." 6:44-46.

Jesus declares that no man can understand his words unless he is spiritually quickened so that he can perceive with the eye of intuition. It is the Spirit manifesting through Jesus which draws Spirit manifesting in individuals. Quite naturally, anyone who "hears" with the ear of intuition is drawn to a true teacher who is a manifestation of God on earth. He who is of God (who is intuitively aware) can realize his God-nature. No man can perceive the Father (Spirit) unless he is intuitively awakened.

In chapter eight we find Jesus going to the Mount of Olives. One morning, while he is at the temple, people come to be taught by him. The Scribes and Pharisees bring a woman to him who has been caught in the act of adultery. They are testing Jesus by saying that Moses, in his law, stated that such a person should be stoned and they ask him what he has to say of the matter. This is an obvious trap. Jesus pretends not to hear them and instead he did what was, and is, common for men to do in that part of the world when they are in deep thought. He stooped down and wrote on the ground. This is an idle activity to allow for one to have time to think and let time pass. What he scratched in the loose dirt had no connection with the moment, indicating that it was an idle gesture, because it is recorded that "he wrote as though he heard them not." After thinking a while he stood up and said, "He that is without sin (error), let him first cast a stone at her." Then, he returned to writing on the ground. Having nothing to say in response to this challenging question, the men slipped quietly away.

There follows a brief explanation by Jesus of his relationship with the Infinite and how a self-realized person behaves:

"I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." 8:12.

As pointed out in the opening paragraphs of this book, Christ Consciousness is That which lights the world. Any soul which awakens to this level of consciousness transcends the influence of darkness or, nature. A soul which is not self-realized is said to be in sin or in darkness. The way out of darkness and ignorance is to seek self-realization and become Christ Conscious.

"Ye neither know me, nor my Father; if ye had known me, ye should have known my Falther also." 8:19.

A deluded person cannot intuitively grasp the truth about the nature of God. If one, however, becomes Christ Conscious, he will also be able to know the nature of God.

"I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: wither I go, ye cannot come." 8:21.

"Ye are from beneath, I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if you believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." 8:23, 24.

A person who is not self-realized cannot live the life of one who is self-realized. Such a person, unless he seeks self-realization, is destined to leave this world in ignorance. (In sin). Jesus was conscious that he had incarnated as an enlightened soul and stated that he had come from "above" or from the light realms. But, those to whom he addressed himself at this time were "of the world" or were attuned to material things. He stated the plain truth, that unless a man awakens and realizes his true nature as a Christ Conscious soul (*if you believe not*) he will surely pass from this world in his state of delusion. Of course, such souls eventually awaken in the next, or some future incarnation.

"When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things." 8:28.

When we lift up and purify our human nature we awaken to the realization of our God-nature and understand the consciousness of one such as Jesus. Then we see how all wisdom flows from within as a result of the enlightened consciousness.

"If ye continue in my word, then ye are my disciples indeed. And, ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." 8:31,32.

If a sincere truth seeker will abide by the wise counsel of a self-realized Master he will be known as a true disciple. He will eventually know the truth about the nature of God, about himself, and his relationship with all life. This realization will make him free.

Those who listen to Jesus are not clear about what he is trying to tell them and Jesus says:

"Why do you not understand my speech? even because you cannot hear my word?" 8:43.

The people do not understand what Jesus is talking about because they are living in a different world, a different consciousness from that which is his. They do not really "hear" him. They try to relate what he says to their own points of reference instead of trying to use intuition to grasp the meaning of his words.

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." 8:44.

Here, Jesus refers to the fabric of nature as understood by Oriental sages. The ancients referred to this same thing as maya; composed of the elements of time, space, motion and light particles, from which the forms of creation were fashioned. A soul which becomes involved with this fabric of nature is deluded because it blots out intuition. A person

who is fully identified with this, is of the devil, in New Testament terminology, because the Greek word, *diabolus* means devil. Old Testament seers referred to it as *satan* or the "adversary". That with which a person on the spiritual path must contend and eventually rise above to attain enlightment. So, one who is mainly concerned with the things of this world, without Divine guidance, is said to be concerned with the works of the devil. The devil, satan, maya, the sense of illusion, by whatever name we call it, is the cause of error. There is no truth in it. It is merely the substance which is used by the Supreme Intelligence to fashion the worlds.

"Verily I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." 8:51.

If one will remain in the realization of Christ Consciousness, (keep my saying) the fluctuations of awareness will cease. The realization of the true nature of the soul, which is Spirit individualized, hence; birthless, deathless and indestructable; will banish the former concept of death, which means an end or, a shutting down, of awareness.

This really stirred the people up and they asked Jesus if he considered himself to be greater than Abraham. Jesus responded:

"Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and saw it and was glad." 8:56.

Abraham rejoiced to realize the Christ Consciousness (which is impersonal and available to all).

The question is then put to Jesus, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" 8:57.

"Jesus said unto them, Verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am." 8:58.

Before Abraham, a long time ago, Spirit existed. One who is God-conscious can say, "All who have realized the truth about themselves, even centuries ago, have realized my consciousness."

We are not promised eternal life in the future as a result of good deeds in this world. The message of Jesus is that eternal life is right now for anyone who can awaken to it.

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In chapter nine we read of the healing of the man blind from birth. The Pharisees cannot understand how Jesus dares to heal on the sabbath. Also, if he is not a righteous man, what is his secret of doing good?

> "I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But, he that entereth in by the door, is the shepherd of the sheep . . . and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name: and he leadeth them out." 10:1-3.

Here is a parable which tells us that to rise spiritually we must have pure motives and go straight into the kingdom (fold). Only such a person is capable of being an instrument through which others can be shown the way to God-realization. One who does not go straight into the kingdom, to the full realization of God but who, instead, seeks realization for personal gain or to exercise power for selfish purposes, is literally a thief and a robber. Such people tend to become sorcerers or pseudo-spiritual meddlers in the affairs of others. One who yearns to know the ultimate Truth should strive to realize Christ Consciousness, the door to God Consciousness. Regardless of whether this level of consciousness is called Christ Consciousness, Universal Intelligence or the Realm of Perfected Beings . . . it is still the only way to God-realization.

> "I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." 10:9.

Christ Consciousness, by whatever name, is the door to the transcendental experience. Anyone who enters through this door shall "be saved" from ignorance and pain. Such a person can "go in and out" or enter and return at will and be sustained by It. This experience is termed *samadhi* by Eastern teachers. Samadhi means

realization of oneness. As we enter this state of consciousness during meditation our eternal happiness and eventual liberation is assured.

> "The thief cometh not, but for to steal and to kill and destroy: I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." 10:10.

The "thief", one who is only partially self-realized and has impure motives, does more harm than good, confuses others and destroys all hope. The pure Christ Consciousness, revealed in the ministry of a dedicated, self-realized person, awakens souls and shows them the way to the abundant life. Freedom, lack of limitation, health and happiness awaits the person who treads the path of self-realization. When, as a result of self-realization, false notions about life are dissolved, wholeness is the natural effect.

> "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." 10:27-30.

Jesus states, "My true disciples intuitively understand my message and follow my instructions so that they might awaken and realize what I have realized: and I (Christ Consciousness) give them the awareness of eternal life; and they shall never perish, (become lost and confused) neither shall any pluck them out of my hand, (No one will ever sway them from their goal of realizing what I have realized.) My Father God which gave them me, is greater than all (since it is the Source and Sustainer of all) and none can entice them away from God. I am one with the Father. (My nature (Christ Consciousness) is the same as God's nature.")

In chapter eleven we come to the story of the raising of Lazarus. The two sisters of Lazarus, Mary and Martha, went to Jesus to tell him of the sickness that had befallen their brother. When Jesus was informed he said, "This

sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." In modern language, "This condition will not result in his death, it will be the means of his having a greater realization of his true nature when the Christ Consciousness manifests in him." Jesus made no attempt to go to Lazarus at this time but remained two more days where he was. Then, after this time, he asked his disciples to go with him once more to Judea. The disciples, remembering their previous trip there when they were almost stoned, sought to restrain Jesus. But, the Master, ever in command, explained that a man will not stumble or make mistakes if he walks in the light of intuition (the light of day). He suggests that he knows where he is going and why, and it will be safe. (John 11:10).

We read that when Jesus came to the grave and knew that Lazarus was dead he was troubled and even wept. A strange thing, indeed! He had been in no hurry to get there and had reassured the two sisters that the sickness would not prove fatal.

Then, he aroused himself and moved to the entrance of the grave, which was a cave which was blocked by a stone. The stone was rolled back. The body had been dead, to all intents and purposes, for at least four days. Jesus lifted up his eyes (raised his vision from the appearance-world to the Real World) and, after establishing himself in an exalted state of consciousness, commanded Lazarus to "come forth." And, Lazarus did come forth, bound in his grave clothes which had to be removed.

Let us look at the situation. In the East, and we must never forget that what took place was in the East, disciples are taught to enter meditation to the point of transcending body awareness. Some disciples, after long concentration, enter into a condition of breathlessness and remain in a state of suspended animation for a long time. *Dead* to the outer world they are intensely aware of the *inner realms*. Lazarus, being close to Jesus, may have been

taught the art of deep meditation. This might explain the apparent lack of concern shown by Jesus when he was first informed of Lazarus' "sickness." Or, perhaps Jesus knew intuitively, if Lazarus was ill, that there was no cause for alarm at the moment. Certain it is, that Jesus was not afraid of Lazarus' passing from the body. His statement to the effect that the condition of Lazarus was not "unto death" but rather, for the "glory of God." would seem to indicate that he felt Lazarus would have an elevating experience of some kind. This, to me, seems more sensible than for Jesus to allow Lazarus to leave the body, only to bring him back to demonstrate his ability. He had ample opportunity to demonstrate his power at other times and in other ways. The record shows that Jesus was visibly moved when he found Lazarus dead. Gathering himself, that is, gathering his powers through concentration, he cleared his consciousness so that he realized his oneness with God and from this level, *spoke the word,* commanding the vital force to animate the body of Lazarus. A superior will, backed by deep realization of God, can work, what seems to the average person, a miracle. Perhaps Lazarus was in a cataleptic state which resembled death, but with a faint evidence of life force still active in the brain and spine. Whatever the circumstances, he was called back to the awareness of this world and those who witnessed the event were greatly impressed.

But trouble was brewing. The chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and decided if Jesus were to continue his ministry the common people would believe him more than they. And, they would lose their influence and be removed from their positions. So, they decided to get him out of the picture. Passover was approaching, and a peculiar series of events were about to transpire.

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We find Jesus still in the predicament of having people, even his close followers, refusing to believe all he says. This, even after they have witnessed his ministry. Six days

before the Passover Jesus went to Bethany (John 12:1) and had supper with Lazarus, Mary, Martha and the disciples.

The next day there was a feast and as he made his way to it, many people who had heard of the Lazarus miracle met and welcomed him to Jerusalem. At this time, Jesus perceived that the end of his earthly ministry was near. Many people, including some of the chief rulers, believed in his ministry but did not take a public stand with him.

While having a last supper with his disciples Jesus instructed them. He told them to be humble and cling to the faith. Also, according to this gospel, he recognized Judas as the one who would play the role of betraying him. Telling Judas to go and carry out his plan, he continued to talk with the disciples. The disciples saw Jesus speak to Judas and saw Judas leave the room, but they presumed that Jesus had told him to go buy food for the poor. (John 13:29) Some translators of the Dead Sea Scrolls, have concluded that the "poor" referred to, in the New Testament, meant the colony of Essenes and not "poor people." But, since we are dealing here with the false presumption of the disciples there is no point in discussing the matter now.

The traditional picture is here altered somewhat. Judas is often thought of as being the person who betrayed Jesus. Yet, we see here that Jesus was fully aware of the intentions of his disciple and even told him to go and do what he must do. So, Judas in this light, cannot be considered the cause of what is to transpire. He is obviously only one of many involved in playing a role.

At this point, St. John relates that Jesus gave a new commandment to his disciples:

"A new commandment I give unto you, That you love one another; as I have loved you, that ye may also love one another." 13:34.
"Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, wither goest thou? Jesus answered him, "Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards." 13:36.

Referring to an earlier statement made by Jesus, Peter asks for more definite information as to where Jesus is going and why he may not be followed. Jesus assures him that he (Peter) may follow later, when he has cleared his consciousness and is able to comprehend the nature of spiritual enlightenment. When Peter is insistent and even claims that he is willing to lay down his life for Jesus, Jesus uses his precognitive power and tells Peter that he will deny him in spite of his willingness to lay down his life. That it is easy to be sincerely brave in a safe situation and later revert to fear in the face of adversity, we shall presently learn.

Then, Jesus comforts his disciples and prepares them for what is to come:

> "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And, if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, ye may be also." 14:1-3.

"Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in the Infinite, since I am one with it, believe also in me. In the Infinite Omnipresence there are many planes of consciousness, you may be assured of that. Because I go to be established in a higher and clearer level of awareness, you too will rise to meet me there at the new level."

> "Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If you had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him and have seen him." 14:5.

In response to the question posed by Thomas, Jesus says, "I (Christ Consciousness) am the way to Cosmic Consciousness and I (Christ Consciousness) am truth and life." *Truth* and *Life* is the nature of this pure consciousness. No man experiences Cosmic Consciousness without moving through the level of Christ Consciousness, which is the door. If you had experienced this state for yourself (known me) you would also have known (experienced)

God. But, in the future you will experience this."

Philip, a disciple who is also present, is still not aware of what Jesus is trying to explain and asks Jesus to show him the Father. Jesus again explains the levels of awareness and continues:

". . . He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." 14:12.

"He that communes with the Christ Conscious state shall do mighty works as I have done and even greater things, according to his realization and ability."

"And whatsoever you shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it." 14:13, 14.

"And whatever you want to see accomplished, while you remain in the realization of Christ Consciousness, you have but to *will it* and it shall be done." At this level the self-realized soul sees clearly how mind-stuff appears as matter.

"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot perceive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." 14:16, 17.

"I will intercede on your behalf, that your consciousness might be opened, so you can become aware of the Comforter (the Holy Ghost, Amen, Aum) and through steady contemplation of this, you will follow it to the Source, which is God. You will then comprehend the Spirit of truth even though others cannot because they are not as perceptive as you are."

"I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day, ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." 14:18-21.

"I will not forsake you. In a little while I will pass from this world as far as the common people are concerned. You will be able to see and comprehend the Christ Consciousness through the practice of meditation and because of your resulting spiritual unfoldment. When you realize me (Christ Consciousness) then you will understand the relationship between these levels of awareness. You will see there is no separation. He who lives according to the spiritual laws and practices deep meditation, will move into the full realization of the Infinite. He will become a liberated soul."

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." 14:26.

When serious seekers of Truth learn to attune themselves to the Cosmic Vibration (Holy Ghost) then intuition is awakened and arouses memories of self-realization as well as gives the person access to the storehouse of the subconscious so that all things heard and experienced can be recalled easily.

Then Jesus blessed his disciples and assured them of his certain merging in the Ocean of Cosmic Consciousness. He also tells them that the "prince of this world" will come for him and "find nothing in him". (John 14:30). That is, the sense of illusion will try to invade his consciousness but will not do so because his consciousness is pure and there are no mental images with which delusive ideas can correspond. Jesus is preparing himself to leave this world by establishing himself in the inward realization of his God-nature.

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he takest away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." 15:1-5.

The Christ Consciousness is the channel through which life and power flows into creation. Any attribute within the consciousness of man which is not developed, is removed or becomes dormant. Every attribute which is fruitful, increases in ability. But, even the attributes which are fruitful, are cleansed from time to time and tested in the fires of discipline, that they may become more fruitful. All men are sustained by the inner Light . . . Christ Consciousness and are, therefore, branches of the vine, dependent upon the vine for life. Unless we learn to consciously become aware of our Christ Conscious nature we can do nothing of spiritual worth in this world.

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it to you." 15:16.

It was no accident that Jesus called these disciples forth. He knew them from the past and recognized in them certain qualities which could be developed and used for world good. The disciples are assured that whatever they request to be done, as long as they are in the Christ Conscious state (in my name) it will be done.

"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." 15:18, 19.

Because the world (those who are deluded) does not know the truth about God and the nature of things, it resists and resents anyone who claims to know. People who are in tune with ordinary human consciousness get along well with the masses who are at this level of understanding.

"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me. And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." 15:26, 27.

When the disciples are spiritually awakened and in tune with the Aum (Holy Ghost) which emanates from Pure

Consciousness, the disciples shall have power beyond human ability and they shall become self-realized and know the truth, that they are spiritual beings, one with God, and have been from the beginning, just as Jesus realized about himself.

"Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: It is expedient that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send him unto you." 16:7.

Jesus tells them that if he does not leave them as a physical presence they will continue to look to him in that form instead of meditating and realizing their own God-natures. Jesus is speaking as the wise guru who knows what is best for the disciples and also knows that he is able, through his power to bless, to help them "see through" their problems and false notions so that they can awaken spiritually.

In chapter seventeen we find Jesus praying for his disciples, that they might be purified and spiritualized. It is the desire of a true spiritual teacher to awaken his disciples as much as possible before he leaves them. Some of the most beautiful words of the New Testament are to be found in this final prayer.

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." 17.3.

To know the true nature of God and the nature of Christ Consciousness is to know life eternal.

"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." 17.5.

This is the highest prayer anyone can offer, to be fully aware of the nature of God as it was in the beginning, before creation came into manifestation. This attitude represents the ultimate in true meditation.

After Jesus had prayed and blessed the disciples he went with them to a garden which he frequented for periods of contemplation. Judas also knew of this place and brought a band of men with lanterns and weapons. (John

18:3) There is no evidence in this scriptural account that Jesus was betrayed. He knew his destiny and what would befall him every step of the way. For a God-conscious person to be deceived is an impossibility. You will recall that earlier in the evening, at supper, Jesus told Judas to go and do what he must, so he went to the garden with the full knowledge that Judas would know his whereabouts.

The men then took Jesus to Annas, the father-in-law of the high priest of that year.

> "Now Caiaphas (the chief priest) was he which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people." 18:14.

There is no evidence in history to support this view. And, from this point on, through the rest of the gospel narration, we find one inconsistency after another. There is no evidence that the Jews tried Jesus. He was, instead, turned over to Pilate who, after questioning him, stated that he could find no fault in him. The people wanted Barabbas to be released and it was done. Jesus remained captive. He was then "scourged" or whipped with thongs, and the Roman soldiers made a crown of thorns to put on his head and a purple robe was placed upon him. Pilate brought Jesus before the people and again told them that, in his opinion, Jesus was guiltless of any crime. The ruling Jews wanted Jesus to be crucified and Pilate bowed to their wish. Jesus was then taken to the place of the skull, termed Golgotha, where he was crucified between two others. And Pilate wrote a note and put it on the cross. The note said, "Jesus of Nazareth, The King of the Jews". The note was written, it is said, in Hebrew, Greek and Latin. Then the garments taken from Jesus were divided into four parts and his coat was gambled for by the soldiers.

The most astute scholars find the account of the crucifixion to be loaded with falsehoods, legend and hearsay evidence. In the first place the Jews, supposedly, turned Jesus over to Pilate for trial. The inference is that Jesus should be done away with because he represented himself

to be a king. Yet, Jesus is recorded as saying to Pilate that his kingdom is not of this world, which should clear the matter and show that his claim is no threat to any ruling body on earth. This simple explanation is not accepted and the death of Jesus is demanded. Here is a question: if the Jews killed Jesus, why did they not use their traditional methods of stoning or decapitation? If the Romans killed him, why did they not insist on a full trial? After all, Roman law was highly specialized at this time. Why would the Roman soldiers, out of sight of the crowd, before turning Jesus over to the people, put a crown of thorns on his head and a purple robe on his back, and revile and taunt him as "king of the Jews." This story has all the characteristics of a later Roman custom of choosing a victim by drawing lots, during a Saturnalia. At such time the victim was allowed to preside over a celebration with fantastic extravagance. At the end of the celebration the temporary king was sacrificed on the Altar of Saturn, or he killed himself with a weapon provided for this purpose.

There is some doubt that the Roman soldiers performed this rite at this time of year because, traditionally, it was performed on the 17th of December.

There are other stories to the effect that tradition has identified this episode with the earlier customs of Babylon and Persia where a young King Sun rides in a procession in the Spring. In Babylon at the time of Persian domination, a feast was held about the 25th of March, where a prisoner was chosen who was given all honors and privileges of a King during the period of the festival, after which he was stripped of all finery, scourged and hanged.

Remembering that this account of the crucifixion of Jesus was passed on from person to person and not written for several generations, there is a great possibility that many traditions and customs were interwoven with the story to serve particular needs of the Gospel narrator. All of the Gospels have undergone drastic revisions over the

centuries, to serve the needs of the times and the will of more than one church official.

Some writers try to explain the story in a psychological manner. They point out that every man is crucified on Golgotha, or that the awareness of man is confined within the skull and a person must learn to extend his awareness beyond the skull to experience the resurrection if he is to be truly free.

Throughout the Gospel narration we find constant references that the soldiers took precautions to do nothing that would conflict with their behavior according to scriptural prophecy. This seems to indicate that later compilers of the scriptures arranged the details of the story to make it run true to Old Testament prophecy in order to add weight to the Gospels.

CHAPTER

2

The Resurrection Story

THE twentieth chapter tells the story of the resurrection. Mary Magdalene, arriving at the sepulchre and finding the stone taken away from the entrance, runs to Simon Peter with the news; "They have taken the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him." Peter and some disciples hurry to see for themselves. The other disciple; we are not told who he is, arrives first, looks inside and finds the linen clothes lying about. Peter then arrives and also examines the sepulchre, only to find the clothes and the napkin that was wrapped about the head of Jesus, folded and placed to one side. They all agree that Jesus is gone but, at this time, are not aware of the scripture foretelling of the resurrection. (John 20:8) The disciples conclude that Jesus is gone but do not speculate beyond that point. Then Mary, who remains behind after the disciples depart, looks again into the sepulchre and there sees two angels in white who ask her why she is weeping. Turning about, she sees Jesus but does not recognize him. Instead, she supposes him to be the gardner. Looking more closely, however, she recognizes him. Jesus advises her not to touch him as he is not yet

ascended and instructs her to go and inform the disciples that he is ascending. She "straightway" follows his instructions.

That evening, while the disciples are gathered in a room with the doors closed, Jesus suddenly stands in their midst and greets them with, "Peace be unto you". He then shows them his hands and his side which still bear the marks of nails and the spear. (This, in spite of the practice in those days of tying the hands of one crucified, to a T-shaped cross, and not nailed).

Eight days later Jesus again appears to the disciples in a closed room. Later he is with them at the sea of Tiberias and eats fish and bread with them. At this time, in response to their questions, Jesus informs the disciples that Judas will "tarry" or remain in his present state of consciousness until "I come", or until he (Judas) awakens to the Christ Conscious state to be liberated. (John 20:20, 21).

Several different accounts are recorded concerning the resurrection. Matthew, in the 28th chapter, has Mary Magdalene and the other Mary come to the sepulchre and "behold, there is a great earthquake: and the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door and sat upon it." The women hurry to tell the disciples of this dramatic happening and meet Jesus on the road. When word of this event was spread, the chief priests assembled and took counsel. They then gave large sums of money to soldiers and bribed them to say that the disciples had come in the night to take the body away. This, in spite of the fact that a guard was posted at the sepulchre.

Mark, in chapter 26, tells the story in yet another way. Mary Magdalene and Solome brought spices with which to annoint the body of Jesus, according to Mark's account. They met a young man clothed in white who told them that Jesus had risen from the dead. Then they return to the

disciples and meet Jesus on the way. Jesus also, in this gospel, appears to the disciples.

Luke, has Mary Magdalene, Joanna and "the other woman" (Luke 24:10) as his first two at the sepulchre. Two disciples on the way to Emmaus, a village near Jerusalem, meet Jesus along the way and Jesus continues on with them, but they do not recognize him because "their eyes were holden", or they lacked intuitive perception to recognize him. It was not until they prevailed upon the stranger to take food with them, and he took the food, and blessed it that they recognized Jesus. Then he vanished from their sight. The two disciples went to Jerusalem and told the remaining ones about their experience. Jesus appeared in the room at that time and instructed the disciples to examine his body. "Handle me, and see; for a Spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." Then he ate some broiled fish and honeycomb. After this he "opened their understanding" that they might understand the scriptures. Then, going with them to Bethany, he blessed them and ascended, vanishing from their sight.

In the Book of Acts, which many historians believe to have been written as a continuation of the Gospel of Mark, we find two men (Acts 1:11) standing by the disciples after the ascension, who ask, "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven." (The 9th verse tells us that the disciples' vision was blinded by a cloud).

To do justice to the Gospels, we should continue on into the Book of Acts, and into Revelations. It is obvious from the way the story of the resurrection is portrayed that much of it is hearsay, and was pieced together at a later time. There is no doubt in my mind that when this was eventually done, many other things were inserted in the Gospels, such as the idea of Jesus' death being a sacrifice for the world. This concept is obviously a carry-over from

the mystery-cults. That Jesus experienced persecution and rejection as a result of preaching an unpopular doctrine is quite believable. That he evidenced some physical and emotional unrest as a result of taking on the responsibility of helping people and spiritually elevating his disciples is also understandable. Also, being a Master, an enlightened soul, the presence of Jesus on earth could have, and possibly did, clear away somewhat some darkness and confusion from the minds of men as a whole. This is the purpose of an Avatar . . . to spend some time in the world to lift men as part of the universal plan for eventual redemption or liberation of all souls.

Some Gospel accounts have Jesus with the ability to move through solid matter; to go through walls and appear in a room with the doors locked. Others have him manifest in a flesh body and take food. No two Gospels agree on just what happened at the sepulchre on the day of the resurrection. No two agree on just how Jesus made his appearance to whom, and, in what sequence.

Back to the trial for a moment, such as it was, and the sentence of crucifixion. We find great emphasis laid on the fact that the Jews were responsible for it, plus being responsible for the tale that the guards were bribed so that the body of Jesus could be taken from the sepulchre. It is obvious the early writers were not fond of the Jews and wanted them to appear in a bad light. The writers felt the Jews had rejected Jesus even though he had come to be their savior. The disciples, we are told, knowing that Jesus had said, "My kingdom is not of this world", still expected him to return and rule as an earthly king. Much has been made of the promised second coming of Jesus by preachers and writers throughout the centuries. Hardly a generation passes without someone, looking upon the world scene for "last day" evidence, boldly proclaims, "This is it". Fundamentalist Christians are ever looking for Jesus to return and save them from a tired and misunderstanding world,

failing to realize that the only thing that can save man is for him to awaken spiritually and realize the Christ within, as Jesus did for himself. Only when "the mind that was in Jesus" is within man, will man be saved from the pressures of the world and the conflicts within himself.

The Gospels were not written until some years after it became obvious that Jesus was not going to return in his physical body. Therefore, a change in philosophy was in order. We must credit Paul with a dynamic approach to the problem, for it was he who had a vision and preached "Christ, not in the flesh." He had not known Jesus in person. He preached inspirationally about a Universal Christ Consciousness. His preaching was not confined to the Jews, for he took his ministry abroad to the Gentiles, altering his presentation as he went, to suit the needs of the people.

With Paul's ministry we find the concept of Jesus being transformed and universalized. To Paul, in the minds of many scholars, goes the distinction of being the first Christian. Reinhold Niebuhr writes, "In terms of obvious history, it is certainly true that Christianity it not the religion of Jesus." Albert Schweitzer, and others, were convinced after much study that many of the speeches in Acts, as well as the prayers of Jesus prior to his execution, are based on what people thought he must have said. We do know that over the centuries, the scriptures have been altered through revision and translations. Therefore, a literal interpretation cannot be accepted and we must go behind the written word to grasp the intent of the characters of the Gospels.

We cannot depend upon accounts which do not agree. If we are to rely upon revelation, whose revelation shall we accept?

The resurrection story gives hope to millions of people but the drama is based upon ancient Spring celebrations

in which nature renews herself. The teaching that Jesus died for the sins of the world is reversion to the belief in the value of blood sacrifice and no reasoning person can accept it at face value.

Man is always being awakened to new levels of conscious understanding. Millions of Christians accept Jesus as their savior. If their faith enables them to use his ideal as a point of contact with the Infinite, and they are thereby elevated, this is helpful. If they strive to live according to the precepts as attributed to Jesus and find their way out of darkness into the light of truth, again, this is good. There is really nothing in the Gospels which is new or revealing. The concepts, suggestions and general philosophy presented in them can be found in all great world scriptures. Wherever there is a scripture that has met the needs of the people for a long period of time, there we will find a vital message, interlaced with myths and traditional stories. This holds true for the Gospels also.

That there is an impersonal, universal intelligence, pervading and directing the move of creation, no one can deny. Where is Jesus now? The popularized image of Jesus is firmly established in the subconscious of millions of human beings today, largely due to the insistent public relations efforts of various churches. But, what of the soul which was incarnated and played the role we are concerned with, some 2,000 years ago? Has Jesus incarnated since the time he left this earth scene, or did he remain absorbed in God-consciousness. The disciples thought that Jesus would return to earth shortly after he left them; but he did not. Some writers claim that Jesus did not ascend, but merely left the country and continued his ministry among other peoples in other lands and lived to a ripe old age. Their contentions are not based upon historical evidence. The same is true regarding numerous speculations of other writers concerning the years not mentioned in the Gospels about his early manhood.

It seems more realistic to me, and in keeping with the words of Jesus, to believe that man's savior is his own awakened consciousness. When man awakens sufficiently, he realizes that he too, is a God-man, saved from misery due to ignorance. At this time his eyes are opened, he can understand the scriptures and, if so led, can do mighty works.

CHAPTER

3

The Problem of Examining the Gospels in the Twentieth Century

EVEN today, in our enlightened age, it is no small task to face the facts of how and why the Gospels came to be published. And to present the known facts, such as they are, to people who cling to cherished theories and opinions is not always to be popular. The average layman knows little or nothing about the origin of his scripture and seems to care even less. Some Christians accept the Bible as the absolute word of God, just as it is. Others feel they have a right to examine the Bible and make their own interpretations. Then, there are those who reject it completely. People who are unsure of their facts often become emotional in their defense. This is so where the Bible is concerned. To the true believer, any attempt to investigate the history of the Bible borders on heresy.

Let us, therefore, approach this subject with the view that our faithfulness to truth is our most sacred obligation, and nothing that supresses truth can be genuinely religious or good.

In this section, I will introduce some known background material which the reader may choose to investigate at greater length. The New Testament has been undergoing constant revision since its inception. "New" and "revised" versions of the Bible flood the bookstores. Much of this work is undertaken in order to attempt to place Gospel narrative in harmony with historical facts and much is an attempt to make the scriptures easier to read and more meaningful to the sincere Christian. If the purposes are achieved there is no real harm done. However, a purely objective, intellectual approach to scripture will not reveal that which has been infused due to the mystical vision of early writers or central characters. Only a person with intuitive perception can unlock the mystery of revelations which were, originally, intuitively perceived. Scholarly treatment can, however, assist us to see through the interpolations and outright figments of imagination which have crept into the Gospels.

The New Testament is a selection of materials taken from a wide choice of literature, gradually agreed upon by church authorities to be accepted in the main body. For a long time after the time of Jesus, the Old Testament was used almost exclusively to prove fulfilled prophecy and the New Testament was considered to be of secondary importance. The Four Gospels were not written at the same time, and are just a few of the manuscripts of a similar nature which the early church had to draw upon. The Gospels are obviously a synthesis of viewpoints and opinions. They do not agree on all points but they agree enough to indicate that later Gospels drew upon earlier ones for source material.

The purpose for the Gospels was not that they be used as historical records, but rather as books of instruction to meet an existing need among the faithful. Their purpose was to indoctrinate the reader (or member of the congregation) through a vehicle of instruction which, at all times,

gives approved answers to questions that arise in maintaining one's faith. The Book of Acts, being an extension of the Gospels, is an obvious example of this purpose.

Among the variations, is the account of Herod being concerned with doing away with male children and thus making it an excuse for the Gospel writers to have Joseph and Mary flee with Jesus to Egypt, in order to fulfill Old Testament prophecy. Also, even though emphasis is placed on the idea of Mary's virginity, Jesus' descent is still traced through his father, Joseph, and the Gospels are not even in accord with this accounting. To some, if Mary was not a virgin, it spoils the concept of a pure birth for Jesus. But then the concept that sexual intercourse is impure is a dark age one at best. The doctrine of the virgin birth enhances the divine stature of Jesus and allows for his being a god. On the other hand, if Jesus was a god, born after an altogether different manner than mere mortals, the recorded advice he gave, "Come follow me" is satire and grim jesting. How can a mortal follow the life pattern of a god? To those who need Jesus as a god, the virgin birth concept helps them maintain their illusions. To others, who like to feel that they too will one day attain the level of consciousness as of the Jesus of the Gospels, the idea of natural birth is a greater inspiration in relationship to their own goals and personal insights.

The inner teachings to be found in the New Testament are the same as set forth in other great scriptures of the East which preceded it by several hundred years. The emphasis in both is upon the truth that man is really a divine being; that repentance—turning the attention back to the Source, is necessary for enlightenment; the necessity of spiritual awakening or the "second birth" in order to comprehend the ultimate Truth; the way to freedom through Christ Consciousness and then, God Consciousness.

Some religious people, Unitarians mainly, reject the triune nature of God as being incomprehensible and im-

practical. Yet if properly understood, the explanation is simple and understandable. The Trinity is simply explained as Consciousness (God the Father), Universal Intelligence (God the Son), and the active force in nature (God the Holy Ghost). Understanding that Infinite Life must modify in order to fulfill Its purposes, we can readily grasp the significance of the Trinity. This explanation does not violate our sense of reason or our intuitive insight.

The New Testament, when properly understood, can be taken as it was meant to be from the beginning, as a manual of instruction *to show the way to eternal life.*

CHAPTER

4

Christianity and the Mystery Religions

CHRISTIANITY is deeply indebted to the Mystery Religions, a fact that not one in a million Christians realize. The ideas of secrecy, sacramental grace, the three stages of the spiritual life (purification—illumination—direct vision of Reality) plus the rituals, have all been drawn through a process of synthesis from the Mystery Cults of ancient times. It was not known until the fourth century, this image of Christianity that we know now. At that time, the church fathers began to see that Christianity could not compete with the then existing groups such as Stoicism, which proclaimed God as Mind and the Soul of the Cosmos; the Hermetic philosophy which prevailed upon man to subjugate his earthly nature through the knowledge from God and set free his higher or celestial being; and the Mithra-cult.

From the Mithra-cult we derive much of what are now, modern Christian ideals. It is no accident that Christians celebrate December 25th as the birthday of Jesus (when history implies his birth to be earlier in the year), because this date is the date of the Sun-god Mithras, after whom

we still name the day called Sunday, the first day of the week. The blood baptism is obviously drawn from the pre-Christian Mystery cults. The cult of Attis and its variants had its initiates stand beneath a grating while an animal, usually a bull, was killed above them, and the blood ran down over their bodies to purify them.

The use of the term "Lord" in reference to Jesus was added to the Gospels, apparently due to the influence of the Mystery cults who used the term to signify "redeemer gods" who would save them. In Hebrew this name, or implied name, would have meant God and would not have been used as described in the Gospels at the time of Jesus. By including this in the writing, the men who authored the material were able to make their Jesus, in the eyes of the rest of the world, equal to redeemer-gods. Then too, the concept of the Mother of God which has been applied to Mary, was also highly developed hundreds of years before the Christian era, in Isis and many other stories and symbols. The God Attis was nailed to a tree in order to redeem the faithful, and it is more than coincidental that Paul has Jesus, the Son of God, also nailed to a tree as a ransom for many. We begin to see the synthesis of the teaching and it is doubtful whether we will ever be able to separate fact from contrived fiction.

To Paul, who did not know Jesus "after the flesh" or, in person, but to whom goes much credit for Christianity as it is today, his vision of the Universal Christ became entwined with the then existing mystery religions and their symbols—and the grand blending began. Early Christianity was the result of Paul's inner conclusions and not the plan, particularly, of Jesus himself.

All through the Gospels we find evidence that Jesus was misunderstood by his disciples. They did not, at the time, know him as a god or as a self-realized person. They did not fully grasp his spiritual consciousness, and if we are to believe the story as records reveal it, they did not even

have the courage of their convictions to stand by him in his time of need. When Jesus talked of coming again to his disciples, he was declaring the timeless bond of the true guru-disciple relationship. Yet, we find this idea of the second coming being related as an experience between Jesus and the world as a whole. It is obvious that the best way to establish a workable and worthwhile system of philosophy is to perpetuate this belief in the eventual return of Jesus, who will come back to preside as the head of a spiritual kingdom. This ever-present possibility keeps Jesus alive and in the midst of present-time discussion.

If we are to believe the crucifixion story (and many scholars do not) then we have evidence to presume that Jesus, being available, was substituted for the already chosen human sacrifice and that his death was not solely the result of the vengeance of ecclesiastical authority. The mystery groups had many ritual-dramas which were enacted from time to time, at prescribed seasons. One of these was the drama of Attis, on the day of blood (corresponding to what was later Good Friday). On this day, Attis was fastened to a tree and bled to death. At the end of the day he was buried in the ground—or in Rome was placed in a sepulchre. When the days of mourning were passed, it was announced that Attis had risen from the dead. This was followed by an orgiastic celebration. This ritual had been known for a long time before the birth of Christianity and its resemblance to the story of the death and resurrection of Jesus were, and are, so obvious that resentment is deep in many quarters.

The bread and wine sacrament goes back to crude beginnings. Originally, the "corn spirit" was embodied in a human representative, who was then killed ritually, and eaten. Later an animal was substituted. Decorated to represent the god, the animal was torn to pieces, its flesh devoured and its blood drunk by devotees in a state of

frenzy. In this way, it was believed that the god became one with the worshippers.

It was an Egyptian custom to embed corn (cereals such as wheat or barley) in the corpse of the victim who represented the god and when this, in time, sprouted and grew and was harvested, it was made into bread and eaten. To eat this bread was to absorb the god into oneself. It is not hard to connect this idea with the sacramental rituals used in modern churches. We cannot pass over these obvious signs with the remark that these symbols "are now Christian" any more than we can say that Christian ethics have been mystery religion ethics. There has been a synthesis over the centuries and this has always been the case when a new order of thought emerged in the minds of men.

Paul knew of the simple ritual of the last supper where Jesus and his disciples gathered just before the end of his earthly ministry. Unless we are to concede that Jesus was influenced by the mystery religions; a proposition which is improbable, then Jesus must have merely observed the custom peculiar to Oriental peoples, that of eating a meal prior to the passing of a person, to mark the event as a spiritual one. It would have been the most natural thing for Jesus to gather his disciples about him at this last meal to instruct and bless them. Paul, knowing that this last meal was observed, and knowing the story would not be readily accepted as a sacramental gesture by his Gentile converts, could have been influenced to present an explanation that would be acceptable to his followers. So, he "received of the Lord" that he should institute a new sacrament.

Present day religious leaders who feel they have new insight obviously, as did Paul, tend to slant their philosophy so that it is compatible with the teachings of Jesus. All religious teaching undergoes a gradual ritualistic alteration as new understanding replaces old concepts. I feel that in two or three centuries from now, the version of

Christianity, if offered at all, will no more compare with the current view than the present teaching compares with the mystery cults of the past.

Paul wrote of his conception of Christ, for his own times, to meet the needs of people who lived in a dark age period. While much of what Paul wrote in his letters, being basic, can be related to the needs of today's people, much was also written which no longer can be applied to changed traditions and customs.

Pertaining to the *resurrection,* Paul wrote of the celestial body or the subtle light body, not the raising of the body of flesh. Man is resurrected every time he breaks through the barriers of consciousness within himself. The ideal of the resurrected physical body is not a practical concept, in the light of reincarnation and the fact that the body soon disintegrates after the soul leaves it.

Christianity, then, was established because of its universal philosophy and the fact that it could fit into already-formed systems. It was the beginning of the change in religious systems in that part of the world where its first influence was felt. This happened when civilization reached the low point in the dark ages (A.D. 499) and the trend was beginning to swing upwards. The *old* always makes way for the *new* in the scheme of things, yet the transition is never clearly defined. Even in the most exalted moments we are reminded that, inconsistent with the Pauline doctrine of love, is the belief in retribution for the wicked and punishment for the willful unbeliever. This latter view has found agreement with the underprivileged and oppressed, as it gives them inner satisfaction to feel that if they will believe, in spite of their misery in this world, they will one day merit their reward, while the evil person, the unbeliever and the skeptic, will suffer endlessly.

Historians are not agreed as to the time and exact events of the ministry of Jesus. In the Dead Sea Scrolls,

which are not proving to be so helpful as it was once thought they might, there are many references to the "teacher of righteousness." It is known that there were many teachers and healers moving about the countryside at the time of Jesus. One New Testament incident tells of the disciples' questioning Jesus about a healer and Jesus instructs them, "He who is not against us is for us". Some scholars are of the opinion that the Gospel Jesus is the sum - total of the stories surrounding many wandering teacher-healers.

Whether or not Jesus actually turned water into wine, multiplied the loaves and fishes in a miraculous manner and walked on the water, is of little concern to us in our quest for the truth about the *way* to self-realization. George Lamsa, in one of his commentaries, claims that the term referring to Jesus walking on the water really means, "walking beside the water". What is important to us is not the verification of incidents in the daily life of Jesus, but whether or not the teaching has any power to transform us and assist us in our pursuit of self-knowledge.

Jesus followed the pattern of other Master-teachers before him. He awakened early in life to a sense of his true destiny. He called forth his disciples and trained them to carry on in his footsteps. He re-stated eternal truths for the people of his time. He declared his awareness of God. And, when his ministry was fulfilled, he left the mortal scene.

If Jesus was actually crucified in the manner suggested by the Gospels, then it was either because he consciously entered into the role or he over-stepped himself in being too zealous in teaching the public. It is definite that a soul that realized the truth about itself and the nature of God could not really suffer as a body. It is likely that this portion of the Gospel story is simply the work of a later scholar who wanted the text to be compatible with the ideas ex-

tant at the time among the followers of the various Mystery cults.

If Jesus was crucified, knowing the art of meditation, it would have been simple for him to transcend body awareness for a time and appear *dead* to the eyes of the average person. Later, after being placed in the sepulchre, he could have come back to normal consciousness and removed himself to a safe place. After all, he was seen, according to the scriptures, after his entombment. He even spent a number of weeks teaching his disciples in private. (Acts 1:3)

I am not impressed with books purporting to explain the Gospels in psychological terms only. Nor am I in agreement with the popular trend, at least in modern metaphysical circles, of writing tales of fantasy which have no basis either in historical fact or in the light of intuitive insight. Such works only serve to cloud the issue and confuse true seekers.

The challenge is now, as ever, to see through the maze of conflicting imagery and testimony and perceive directly that which is true and meaningful. This, in the final analysis, in the only thing that will satisfy the yearning of the soul.

Author's note: The reader may want to investigate further and study such works as *The Life of Jesus* by Maurice Goguel, *Iesus* by Guignebert and *The First Christian* by A. Powell Davies. The first two titles are translations from the French and the latter book, by far the most readable, is available in paperback by New American Library in the Mentor series.